

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
February 10, 2016 8:00 p.m.

Chairwoman Kate Murphy called the meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 p.m. in Room 212, middle level, Chatham Municipal Building. Mrs. Murphy announced that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Name	Present	Absent
Kate Murphy (Chair)	X	
Wolfgang Robinson		X
Ben Lampert		X
Brendan Keating		X
John Dey	X	
John Tancredi		X
Kevin Murphy	X	
Billy Conlan		X
John Bitar		X
Carl Cappabianca	X	
Council Member Resto	X	

Public Comment

No one came forward.

Resolution #16-05

The meeting minutes of January 13, 2016 were approved.

Correspondence

Chairwoman Murphy summarized a letter stating that the Borough of Chatham has designated the Environmental Commission as the lead agency in the implementation of the Sustainable Jersey Municipal Services Program.

Also a notice has been received from PSE & G notifying the Borough that PSE & G will be conducting their annual maintenance activity called “Integrated Vegetation Management”. In other words, PSE & G will be trimming vegetation under their high tension wires. Commissioners pointed out that this trimming may impact the bee gardens on St. James Street. Mr. Dey will notify the Borough bee-keepers club about this future trimming. The Chatham Twp. Environmental Commission has sent two sets of meeting minutes.

Information has been received on an ANJEC workshop “Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions” to be held at the Morris County Cultural Center in Morristown on March 19<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Commissioners are invited to the NJ Land Conservancy Rally to be held on Friday March 18<sup>th</sup> at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in Trenton.

### Liaison Reports

#### Planning Board

Ms. Holler reported that the minor subdivision being proposed for 64 Hedges Avenue is continuing. At the request of the Board, a wetlands expert will be inspecting the back portion of the property. Also, on Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. there will be a Community Open House at the Chatham Library for residents to share ideas for the Chatham Borough Master Plan Update.

#### Borough Council

Council Member Resto reported on a fire today at National Manufacturing on River Road. A chemical was released into the air; however, it was not harmful. A couple of nights ago, the Fire Department answered a call to a home on Clark Street. Somehow an ancient pesticide tipped over and broke, giving off an odor similar to Agent Orange.

Council Member Resto also reported that the Environmental Badge Award was announced at a recent Borough Council meeting. Applications are available in Borough Hall.

Council Member Resto stated at a Council meeting he had brought up the matter of the recycling bins being so high up and awkward for people trying to empty their recycling tubs. Mayor Harris had informed him that a liability issue is created when railing and steps are installed. Council Member Resto explained an alternate railing arrangement that could be considered.

Council Member Resto also, at the recent Council Meeting, had asked members of the audience to consider volunteering for trail clean-up days.

Mr. Dey and Council Member Resto noted the bad condition of the road belonging to the Borough Recycling Center. The road is both unsafe and unattractive. Council Member Resto speak with Mr. Torello, the DPW Director, about possible repairs for this road.

#### Community Gardens

Council Member Resto reported that a meeting of all the gardeners will be held on February 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Chatham Library. Seventy gardeners belong to this group. There are still half plots and quarter plots available.

#### Boy Scouts

Mr. Resto reported that there is a Boy Scout interested in undertaking a project at Kelley's Pond. The Scout will be presenting his project at the next Commission meeting. Mr. Murphy said that there are Scouts in Troop 28 who are looking for Eagle projects to undertake.

#### Rain Garden

Commissioners complimented Mr. Cappabianca on the fine condition of the Garden. Mr. Cappabianca stated that in the wintertime, when he is out running, he pulls various garbage items out of the Rain Garden. New plantings will be put in at spring time. Money has been set aside for these plantings.

#### Eco-Film Series

Mrs. Murphy reported that she is trying to locate the film “This Changes Everything”. Mr. Tancredi and Mr. Conlan will be helping with this film series.

#### League of Municipalities

Mr. Resto stated that there was nothing new environmental-wise to report.

#### Pilgrim Pipeline

Mr. Resto reported that Pilgrim Pipeline has filed for permits in New York State. Many New York towns are fighting these filings. Some towns have banned pipelines in their land use ordinances. This coming Saturday (Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>) mayors of several affected municipalities will be gathering at our Borough Hall to further discuss this proposed pipeline. Mr. Resto stated that he has spoken with former Governor Codey who co-sponsored a bill to have eminent domain apply in situations where a pipeline would have to be regulated by the BPU. Unfortunately the bill has been sitting in Committee for almost a year, because of the unions.

Council Member Resto believed that the municipal pipeline group should hire an environmental firm to do a study. Council Member Resto noted that the towns wanting to protect their interests as respects the pipeline will want to work together. They are currently banding together to select legal representation for their fight.

#### Environmental Badge Award

Chairwoman Murphy distributed copies of the flyers advertising this award program. She has given a flyer to the Library to post. Also, e-mails announcing this award has been sent to residents who participated in the Green Challenge. Council Member Resto will send the Badge information to Ed Barmakian of Tap Into Chatham.

#### Status of Budget

Council Member Resto reported that the Borough Council is currently in the middle of Budget Season. The Budget will be introduced by the Mayor and Council in mid-March.

#### Explore Chatham

Mr. Dey said he would walk a few of the trails when the weather improves.

#### Flyer for Recycling Tips

Mr. Murphy reported on what information the MCMUA had on their website. The MCMUA had three pages of recycling tips. Mr. Resto suggested just putting a few tips at a time on the Commission website.

#### Direct Install Breakfast

Council Member Resto will be working with Tony Britt on this event.

#### Plastic Bag Initiative

Mr. Lampert wasn't present to give an update. Chairwoman Murphy pointed out that Shop Rite in Chatham Twp. now has an Environmental Division.

#### Joint Trail Projects with the City of Summit

Council Member Resto will be contacting the new mayor of Summit to see if she would be interested in this project.

#### Trail Clean-up

The Commission decided on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> as the Clean-up date. They will concentrate their clean-up work on Shepard Kollock Park, by the river. Council Member Resto offered to walk Shepard Kollock ahead of time to get a good idea of what areas needed attention. Council Member Resto suggested contacting Scoutmaster Peter Basso to see if any of the older Boy Scouts would be interested in helping out that day. Council Member Resto will reach out to the Kiwanis for volunteers.

#### Generation of a list of possible helpful correspondents

Mr. Murphy reviewed the list of public contacts that the Commission could maintain – the school environmental clubs, scout troops, the Kiwanis, the Rotary, etc. These groups could then be notified of events such as the upcoming trail clean-up. Council Member Resto pointed out that Borough Clerk Robin Kline knows how to create Google groups. E-mails would have to be obtained for each of these Borough groups. Perhaps Shop Rite's environmental group could be approached to sponsor the Commission's clean-up events, maybe donating bags, rakes, gloves, etc.

#### ANJEC grants for Open Space Stewardship

Chairwoman Murphy reported that ANJEC is accepting applications from environmental commissions for grants up to \$1,500 for Open Space stewardship projects such as trail blazing, habitat enhancement, etc. Council Member Resto suggested Commissioners take a walk along the Passaic River trail, if it's not submerged by water, and take photos to show what work needed to be done. When this is determined, the Commission could then apply for the grant. This matter will be re-visited at the March meeting.

#### New Business

##### Educating the public about medication disposal

Council Member Resto reported on an article from the Great Swamp Watershed newsletter. Apparently, people been dumping hormonal medications incorrectly. Studies have revealed levels of estrogen in the waters of the Great Swamp. Male fish are now developing female characteristics. Council Member Resto has put a call into Borough Police Chief Crosson to work with the DEA in arranging a Prescription Take-Back Day. Commissioners discussed having a year-round drop-off bin like the one in Madison. Unfortunately, many people do not want to wait a whole year to dispose of medications. Council Member Resto will look into the possibility of such a bin for Chatham.

##### Use of Neocotinoids in Landscaping

Mr. Dey explained that neocotinoids are a class of pesticides that are good at killing bugs; however, they may also be killing our important pollinators. He noted that Rutgers University has a site listing organic landscapers in New Jersey. Only one organic landscaper is listed for Morris County. Mr. Dey questioned how the public could be educated on the dangers these pesticides have on bees. Council Member Resto suggested the Commission could send letters to

local landscapers urging them not to use neocotinoids. One-third of the food we eat come from pollinators.

After further discussion, Council Member Resto volunteered to further research neocotinoids. He will then draft a letter that could be send to the environmental clubs at the local schools informing them of the dangerous effects of neocotinoids. The parents of these students will probably hear of this concern from their children.

At 9:21 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 9, 2016, 8:00 p.m., Room 212, Middle Level, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler  
Recording Secretary